



# Montgomery County Council

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**For Immediate Release**

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INFORMATION: Justina Ferber – 240-777-7938

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**CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION INVITES CITIZENS TO PUBLIC  
FORUMS ON DECEMBER 12 AND JANUARY 9 TO COMMENT ON  
COUNTY COUNCIL REPRESENTATION**

The Montgomery County Charter Review Commission is holding a series of public forums and discussions during the next few months at which citizens will be invited to discuss the advantages and problems of, or alternatives to our current system of electing four Council members at-large, and five Council members by single-member districts.

During 2001, the Commission conducted a series of informal discussions with county citizens about the changes in demography, economic structure, and technology that have occurred since the adoption of the current Charter in 1968. The purpose of these discussions was to assist the Commission in determining whether any of these changes warranted amendments to the Charter to keep the government in step with the times and to improve its performance, representativeness, or accountability.

The Commission concluded that many of the issues presented could be addressed through legislation or administrative actions and were inappropriate subjects for Charter amendment. The one issue that the Commission considered for further study and possible amendment is whether the current system of County Council representation adequately addresses the increased demographic and economic diversity of the County and the prospect that its diversity will continue to increase.

The Commission has not reached a judgment on whether changes are warranted, but wants to examine this issue more extensively and determine if Charter amendments are necessary. The Commission intends to complete the research, study and public discussion phase of its deliberations by March 2002 to have sufficient time to prepare a report to the Council, which is due in May.

A discussion paper -- Charter Issues Arising from Changes in Montgomery County -- outlining the issues being discussed by the Commission is available by calling the

Council Office at 240-777-7928 or on the Council web site at [WWW.CO.MO.MD.US/COUNCIL](http://WWW.CO.MO.MD.US/COUNCIL).

The public is invited to attend public discussions on the issue of Council representation with the Charter Review Commission at 7:30 PM at the Upcounty Government Center on December 12 or at 7:30 PM at the East County Government Center on January 9. Citizens who are unable to attend the forums may submit written comments to the Charter Review Commission via fax at #240-777-7888 or c/o County Council, Stella Werner Council Office Building, 100 Maryland Ave., 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Rockville, MD 20850.

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